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DEVELOP THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF
"DOING IT BY ONESELF"

By Yu Chang-jui

- COMMUNIST CHINA -

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DEVELOP THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF
"DOING IT BY ONESELF"

- COMMUNIST CHINA -

[Following is the translation of an article by Yu Chang-jui, in Jen-min Jih-pao, Peiping, 27 September 1960.]

"Doing it by oneself" and "abundant clothing and food" are the mottos proposed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung for the big production movement during the war against the Japanese. These words possess the most profound political and economic significance. They exemplify the revolutionary aspirations and spirit of the proletariat.

During the anti-Japanese war, the large-scale production movement of "doing it by oneself" was launched in 1941 among the Party and political workers, and among the military and the civilians. This permitted the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia border regions and the various liberated areas in the rear of the enemy to reach the goals of "overcoming difficulties" and "abundant clothing and food," consolidated the liberated areas, laid the material foundation for the victory of the anti-Japanese war and the subsequent Chinese people's revolution, accumulated leadership experience for the subsequent economic construction, and fully displayed the great revolutionary significance of "doing it by oneself."

"Doing it by oneself" means to get on one's two feet by one's own efforts and to exert oneself to become strong. It is a work method and also an expression of revolutionary aspirations. Our revolution and reconstruction should do as much as possible to win foreign aid. We needed this kind of aid in the past, and we need it now and in the future. However, we are a nation of a population of over 600 million. If we want to do a good job of building our country, we cannot rely solely on assistance from others, but must rely on "doing it by oneself."

Comrade Mao Tse-tung once pointed out, "We are for standing on our own two feet by our own efforts. We hope

for foreign aid, but must not depend on it. We rely on our own efforts and rely on the creative power of all our military and civilians" ("We Must Learn to Do Economic Work"). From the stand-point of an enterprise or one people's commune, we should follow the spirit of "doing it by oneself", exercise industry and economy in order to make socialism prosperous and establish the system of socialism.

Marxism-Leninism holds that history is created by the mass of people. Laborers create material wealth for society and thus the foundation for science, technology and art. The masses are not only the creators of material wealth and spiritual culture, but also the decisive force of social revolution. The contradictions between productive force and production relationship, between the classes, between the new and the old and between the advanced and the backward push human society to progress. And the masses exert decisive functions in these struggles and contradictions.

In class society, the rise of the exploited and oppressed masses in a struggle against exploiting classes caused the death of the old systems and the establishment of the new systems. Under the conditions of socialism, the masses have become the conscious creators of history. The further the awakening and positivity of the masses develop, the further socialist revolution and construction develop. History proves that only through revolutionary struggles with the active participation of the masses can victory be secured. Therefore, Marxism-Leninism holds the opinion that it is the masses who wrought their own liberation.

Believe in the self-liberation of the masses, believe in the infinitude of the creative force of the masses, and so believe in the people and become one with the people-- that is the viewpoint of the mass line of historical materialism and precisely the basis for our special emphasis on "doing it by oneself".

As for the beginning of human understanding, one may say that begins with "doing it by oneself." Understanding begins with doing, that is, "doing it by oneself." Unless one gets into the water, one cannot learn swimming; unless one participates in productive labor, one does not know the true conditions of productive labor; unless one takes part in the struggle of doing to change realities, one does not understand the rules of social development and class struggle.

Therefore, in order to give good leadership to a political movement, the leading cadres should penetrate into the masses; and, in order to give good leadership to production, the leading cadres must penetrate into production

and participate in production. Numerous lively facts prove that the best method for giving leadership is to participate in production, lead production and to discover and solve problems in the actual practice of productive labor.

The reason that the leadership method of the "Two-Five-System" adopted by the Wu-chiao Hsien Chinese Communist Party Committee in Hopeh Province is correct and the reason that the work system of "learning, doing, transferring and assistance" they have adopted is securing very good results are, first of all, because they are in accordance with the objective rules of human understanding.

Whether those engaged in a revolution and construction should be "doing it by oneself", concentrating on hard work and exerting oneself to become strong, or should they be waiting at the receiving end of support and aid is a question of whether they have revolutionary aspirations or not. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has called upon us "to be united and exert ourselves and create a wealthy and strong nation with our two hands." ("On Correct Handling of the People's Internal Contradictions.")

People with revolutionary aspirations are those who use their own two hands to overcome difficulties and transform poverty into wealth and strength. In the movements of agricultural collectivization and the setting up of people's communes, in the large-scale establishment of urban people's communes and neighborhood industries, and in the movements of technological reform and technological revolution which center around the "ssu-hua" [mechanization, semi-mechanization, automation, semi-automation], there have been innumerable examples of "doing it by oneself," and "starting from scratch."

In the progress of the course of the revolution, various difficulties of different kinds and magnitudes are inevitably encountered. The two hands of the revolutionaries are there to overcome these difficulties. If one feels different and flees from realities in the face of difficulties, then he is lacking in revolutionary aspirations. The land of our country is vast and great differences exist between the climates of the south and the north, and natural calamities of different degrees may come about every year. Some regions are plagued by droughts. The broad mass of people with revolutionary aspirations have carved ditches through hills and passes in order to channel water to irrigate their fields, thus winning a significant victory in their anti-drought struggle.

Ssu-chia-chuang in T'ang-shan Municipality, Hopeh Province, was victimized by floods in 1959 and encountered

hardships in making a living. Hsing Yen-tzu, member of the Youth League, unwilling to resign himself to the fact that his production brigade was always the one that suffered from poverty, was determined to transfer the repeatedly victimized home village into a village abundant in fish and rice. Eventually, under the leadership of the Party, they won over the calamities and changed the picture of the poor brigade.

It is precisely the thousands and tens of thousands of people with revolutionary aspirations like this that are pushing our socialist construction to advance from victory to victory.

Our nation has yet to rid itself of the situation of "i-ch'iung erh-pai" [lit., one poor-two white], our enemy is still pushing us around and natural calamities are still threatening us. In order to deal with the bullying of our enemy, to effectively defeat natural calamities and to build our nation into a strong socialist nation with modern industry, modern agriculture and modern science and culture, we find the key to these in the revolutionary spirit of "doing it by oneself," concentrating on hard work and exerting oneself to become strong.

In the past, the people of China developed this spirit in defeating the enemy, strengthening ourselves and in attaining the goals of "overcoming difficulties" and "abundancy in clothing and food." At present, in answer to the call of the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao, the people of the entire country are concentrating on hard work, exerting themselves to become strong and are developing a movement of increasing production and exercising austerity which is centered around grain and steel. Thus, an even more glorious victory is assured.